DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 077 883 SP 006 564

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TITLE	Community-Based Teacher Education Programs.
INSTITUTION	Michigan State Univ., East Lansing. Mott Inst. for Community Improvement.
PUB DATE	May 73
NOTE	14p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Community Education; Elementary Grades; Elementary School Teachers; *Laboratory Schools; *Laboratory Training; *Preservice Education; *Teacher Interns; Teacher Programs; Teaching Experience; *Urban Teaching
IDENTIFIERS	Michigan

ABSTRACT

This is a report on off-campus, community-based urban teacher education programs in three of the Metropolitan areas in Michigan: Detroit, Pontiac, and Flint. The described purpose of the program is to provide a new teacher with experience for working with urban youth in a changing society, to develop leaders who possess a "feel" for the community from which the child comes. Consequently, the report states, the education student works in the classroom setting on an extended basis and is also allowed to gain first-hand experiences in the community. The remainder of the report briefly describes the three individual programs: the Detroit Specialized Teacher Preparation Program, the Pontiac Teacher Education Program (operated through the Dana P. Witmer Human Resources Center), and the Flint Elementary Intern Program in Urban Teaching. (JA)

ED 077883

Community-Based Teacher Education

Mott Institute for Community Improvement

Elementary Education

Michigan State University

1973

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SP 006 564

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The Mott Institute for Community Improvement with the cooperation of the Elementary Education Department at Michigan State University is conducting off-campus, community-based urban teacher education programs in three of the metropolitan areas in Michigan; Detroit, Pontiac, and Flint. With the initial implementation of the program taking place seven years ago, the program has been continually modified to meet the changes among the public school population, as well as the need for continually expanding teacher expertise. Upon recognizing the need for a program design which would provide for experiences and guidance to help new teachers gain adequate background for working with urban youth in a changing society, the component parts of the over-all program were developed. They offer some options and alternatives in teacher training to undergraduate students desiring to focus their preparation in the area of working with urban youth.

Underlying the community-based program design is the premise that actual involvement with that clientele with which one is preparing to work, along with certain kinds of guidance in the experience will enhance the effectiveness of the individual being trained. More specifically, the typical teacher education major who desires to work with youth in urban areas needs experience in a realistic situation along with additional input from knowledgeable trainers and instructors. The community-based concept offers this experience through the cooperation of the school community in its broadest sense -- the school population itself, the surrounding community and the teacher training institution.

The goals of the community-based urban teacher programs are not only to develop teachers who are equipped with skills and knowledges pertaining to that which is involved in subject matter, but more importantly to

develop leaders who possess a "feel" or sensitivity to the community from which the child comes. To reach this goal, the Michigan State University student works in the classroom setting on an extended basis, and is also able to gain first-hand, in-depth experiences in the community. This two-pronged effort is designed so that the student in training will:

1. Have a more meaningful background of experiences with which to approach the teaching/learning situation in an urban community.
2. Have the cooperative support and guidance of the local school, the community and the teacher training institution.
3. Have greater opportunity to relate theory to practice in an on-the-job context.
4. Have opportunity to see and be involved in the day-to-day aspects of the life of the community.
5. Have options and alternatives to choose from in the program design so that over-all training is geared more to the needs and interests of the individual student.

The present community-based program represents several modifications which have occurred over the several years of operation. Such modifications have been made in an effort to create more meaningful background for students preparing to work in urban areas. It can be said that all changes were made in keeping with the desire to bring about deeper involvement of the student and greater dialogue with the community. Some of the changes that have occurred in the design of the overall program include:

1. Built-in flexibility of community experiences and schools assignments.
2. Closer guidance and supervision of community-based experience.

3. Stronger ties established between the local school and the university personnel.

The urban teacher programs represent several designs in preparation for the student to choose. Hopefully, therefore, the student in training is able to be involved in that program which best suits his needs. The programs which will be described range in length from two terms (Detroit MICI) to a period of two years (Flint EIP).

DETROIT SPECIALIZED TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

This on-site training program provides for a two quarter experience which combines methods work with practical application to the classroom, student teaching, and community involvement.

Students who elect this program as their route to teacher preparation must have a dedication to teaching and a keen desire to work with the children and adults in the urban environment. The students study in Detroit for two terms, with one group beginning in the fall and finishing at the end of the winter term, and another group participating during winter and spring term. The students are clustered in two Detroit Elementary Schools, Franklin and Campbell Schools. Through the cluster arrangement, students are able to work more closely and effectively with other MICI students and the Detroit Public Schools staff. MICI students and staff, teach, learn, and socialize in a portable classroom building located at the Campbell Elementary School.

During the first term, instruction is given in Language Arts, Reading, Social Studies and Community Involvement, Math and Common Elements. These classes are conducted by staff members from Michigan State University and Master teachers from the Detroit Public Schools. During this time, each student participates two days a week in a classroom tutoring children, assisting the teacher and working with a paraprofessional.

The program is action-oriented and many visitations and observations are made in the community. People in social work, community Settlement Houses, local recreation centers and various agencies serve as resources to the program. From these contacts the students choose an area in which they are interested for volunteer work one day a week during student teaching. Through this community involvement, opportunity is given to participate in and review community-oriented programs.

The students set up a demonstration child-centered, interest centered classroom to culminate the first term's work. This classroom provides model learning stations for individual children and for small groups. The emphasis is on designing activities for effective learning rather than rote memorization. Thus it emphasizes innovative programs for individualized instruction. The school staff is invited to view, ask questions about and react to the model. During the second term the students become student teachers in the same classroom in which they participate during first term. It is a major advantage for the students to continue working with the same children and teacher for an extended length of time rather than approach a new situation for student teaching where a rapport with the children and a knowledge of the curriculum has not been previously established. Three days a week are required in this assignment. One day a week students work with another teacher, community agent, counselor or administrator in either of the two clusters at Campbell or Franklin Schools. On another day the students volunteer in the community working with children and adults in a setting outside the classroom. This individualized schedule provides opportunities for a variety of alternatives that are not part of a traditional student teaching program.

A spirit of comraderie characterizes the relationship among MICI students, supervising teachers, school administrators, and MICI staff members. Warm relationships develop as school personnel, MICI students and staff share interests and problems. As a result of this kind of relationship it is possible to seek answers to problems together. This message left for new participants by a group of outgoing students is a reflection of the attitude of the students:

WELCOME TO MICI
It's a Real Trip!

> We bet you're wondering what this MICI thing is all about. Right? Hopefully today you'll get a vague idea, but in order to really know, you've got to do it. There's a lot of hard work involved, you need a strong body, a creative mind, determination, guts, and a real liking for kids. You'll put up with a lot, but in the end if you try it, you'll like it.
>
> Signed,
> We've Been There

Detroit personnel administrators and principals recognize the superior quality of the training received by these Detroit MICI students. Such recognition is of inestimable value in job placement. It is in many instances the difference between successful and unsuccessful job placement. Since the inception of this particular program, its graduates have enjoyed remarkable success in getting and holding responsible teaching positions in urban areas.

PONTIAC TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The MICI Teacher Education Program in Pontiac is operating in the Dana P. Witmer Human Resources Center, a multi-use facilty with accomodations for elementary school children, adult and community use.

What is the Human Resources Center

The Human Resources Center, located in the center of Pontiac, began operation in the fall of 1971. It represents the efforts of many individuals, groups, and organizations and was six years in the planning and construction stages. During this time there was a committee established consisting of community residents and educators for the purpose of guiding the planning and development of the Human Resources Center. The committee was charged with the responsibility of making recommendations for both programs and buildings which could be implemented. Thirty-three recommendations were made and all but one, a swimming pool, were adopted. Some of these recommendations, in addition to space for the elementary school program, included a community theater, public restaurant, adult classrooms, office space for local, county, and state agencies, a medical suite and a dental suite.

Through the community education program the community is encouraged to, and does, make extensive use of these facilities. There are presently 2000 adults participating in programs and activities ranging from adult basic education and high school completion program to karate. Open space is a feature of the portion of the building housing the elementary school children.

The Pontiac Board of Education has designated the Human Resources Center as a demonstration school for programs which will, over a period of time, be implemented throughout the system. These innovations include differentiated staffing, multi-age-multi-level grouping, team teaching and continuous progress instruction which allows each youngster to progress through the curriculum at his own rate.

Several other programs are also in operation in the Human Resources Center which add to its uniqueness as an educational facility. All of the elementary bilingual school children in Pontiac are brought to the building for their education. These children are integrated into teams with other children for a portion of the day and for the remainder of the day have the services of bilingual staff members. The non-Spanish speaking children on these teams are taught Spanish as a second language. In the fall of the 1972-73 school year, a home-based program for three and four year old children was instituted. The children and parents come to the Human Resources Center one day per week where the child is provided with services to meet his needs while the parent is involved in a parent education activity. Once every two weeks a staff member makes a visit to the home and leaves a packet of materials which the parent is shown how to use with the child.

One-hundred and thirteen children certified as emotionally disturbed, educable mentally handicapped and perceptually handicapped from within the Pontiac School District are attending the Human Resources Center. All but eight of these children are full-time members of the general education teams and are not assigned to "special rooms." The children receive the services of a certified special education resource teacher who is assigned to the team. The integration of these students was initiated in an attempt to remove the stigma generally attached to special education students.

Profile of Teacher Training Program

Michigan State University students involved in the Pontiac MICI program spend one academic year (3 terms) assigned to the Human Resources Center.

During the year they take all of the methods courses required for elementary certification, student teach for portions of two terms, and take additional course work which relates to urban problems. Students can earn up to 49 quarter hours of credit during the year.

Methods courses are taught, as often as possible, by the professional staff of the Human Resources Center. In these class sessions students have an opportunity to share with each other the results of what took place when they tried the techniques they were taught during the previous session. This approach affords feedback for both the instructor and the student. In addition, if the students encounter some difficulty with techniques, they may get immediate help from the teacher. Michigan State University staff members also teach some of the methods courses.

Because of the uniqueness of the Human Resources Center, Michigan State University students are able to participate in programs which are not generally available in a traditional setting. As members of a teaching team the students are involved in planning for several levels of student achievement and learn to capitalize on the strengths of the other team members. Because of the multi-age-multi-level organization of the teams they have the opportunity to work with children of different ages during the day. Because of the number of both certified professionals and lay persons assigned to each team, the student teacher is able to work with smaller groups of children than would be possible in a traditional setting, and is therefore able to do more individualizing of instruction. For those student teachers who are majoring in early childhood education the Human Resources Center affords an opportunity to be involved with a pre-school program which is being operated by a public school system.

The MSU Students are encouraged and expected to participate in the community education programs being conducted at the Human Resources Center. Such participation might include tutoring in the adult learning center, working in the food co-op, or serving on a committee such as the one developing the playground.

The Mott Institute for Community Improvement provides an on-site coordinator for the program. Coordinator responsibilities include teaching classes, meeting with team leaders and supervising teachers on a regular basis to handle any problems or conflicts, arranging and supervising "field trips" for Michigan State University students, and recruiting students for the program the following year.

THE FLINT ELEMENTARY INTERN PROGRAM IN URBAN TEACHING

The Elementary Intern Program (EIP) has been in operation at Michigan State University since originating with a Ford Foundation grant in 1959. EIP presently is located in ten Centers throughout Michigan. In 1968, a special EIP Center was established in Flint in cooperation with Michigan State University, the Flint Community Schools, the Mott Institute for Community Improvement, and the C.S. Mott Community College. The major thrust of this Center is specifically oriented to urban teaching.

In general, the Elementary Intern Program in Flint uses the organizational and time structures of the other EIP Centers, attempting to cull the best from all Centers and adding unique features of its own. Students are recruited from high school and community colleges, or from the ranks of teacher aides and paraprofessionals, and are encouraged to apply to EIP during their sophomore year of college. They must exhibit a reasonable standard of academic ability,

and have a strong commitment to the education of inner-city children. Provisions for nearly two years of on-site training, a wedding of theory and practice, and recruitment of candidates indigenous to the city are emphasized. A major effort in recruiting minorities has been attempted.

Many recruits are teacher aides and mothers who have experienced little previous school success or commitment to any life goal. They want to see their children or their charges in a better position, and they have striven for a better existence for themselves and their offspring. People identified by local schools as having positive attitudes and expectations for inner-city students are asked to interview and evaluate the recruits. This initial screening is rough--the candidates are asked to perform like experienced teachers or degreed candidates interviewing for a job. Because of our reputation and the commitment of our applicants, surprisingly few of them fail this screening.

A key person in the training program is the Intern Consultant. This person must be very knowledgeable regarding classroom techniques, innovative approaches, personnel in schools and the community, and the purposes of EIP. Each Intern Consultant is assigned six or seven Interns, and their major responsibility is to serve these Interns in every way possible. The Consultants also supervise Pre-Interns, teach methods and techniques to Pre-Interns, conduct seminars for Interns and provide inservice activities for other professional staff. The key to the success of EIP in Flint revolves around the functioning of the Consultants.

EIP is a very intensive program and, even though Interns receive a reduced salary during Interning, a few candidates just do not succeed. The Pre-Intern year in Flint starts at the beginning of the junior year with an accelerated indepth program of professional classes and school experiences. Pre-Interns

work very hard and are asked to continually analyze their commitments to urban education. Some choose to leave the program during this time. Methods of teaching curriculum, analyses of teaching tasks, understanding of culturally different peoples, involvement in community schools, and perception of one's own prejudices and convictions are primary foci of the Pre-Intern experiences during the junior year in Flint. Methods instructors are selected from both campus and the local area who are aware of and knowledgeable about the problems of urban education; mini-teaching, micro- and macro-teaching, competency-based performance, and the like. The buildup to Interning is sequential but rapid and pervasive. The Pre-Interns are juniors and still have a chance to pursue another vocation if desired. (Regular student teaching is usually done near the end of the senior year when there is less opportunity to change courses or directions). Pre-Interns are constantly evaluated by methods instructors, cooperating teachers, principals, consultants, and the Director. Interns are not only evaluated by the EIP staff, but also are evaluated by school administrators just like a first year teacher.

Several instruments have been developed and used locally or on a statewide basis to determine the effectiveness of EIP. Comments on the best aspects of the program zeroed in on the consultant relationship. This feedback has enabled the Center to improve its Pre-Intern experiences in several ways, and to involve the consultants more in helping both Interns and Pre-Interns. For example, about 40% of the MSU graduates have teacher aides, compared to 25% statewide, and over half of the present Interns have aides. An important facet of training Pre-Interns, then, is on the use of aides in the classroom. A wide variety of training rechniques are used. These include methods instructors teaching demonstration lessons with students, in a regular classroom setting, the use of the Inner City Simulation Laboratory, human

values workshops conducted by the Lecture and Discussion Department of Flint Community Schools and the Detroit based New Perspectives on Race, Inc., competency-based learning packets, and involvement with all facets of the community schools.

The acceptance and success of graduates is the proof of the success of the Flint Elementary Intern Program. Several forces are acting upon it, however, which will lead to changes. The constant feedback from graduates, Interns, Pre-Interns, instructors, consultants, other EIP Centers, and school-community personnel results in continuous improvements in the program. EIP is a negotiable item in the local district, and the bargaining units have a strong prior commitment to their experienced staff first. As financial pinches are felt, or as enrollment decreases, EIP may feel the effects. The time between recruitment and graduation is at least three years; therefore, a need for a strong student commitment over a substantial period of time is essential. Recruiting and financing minority students has not yet been as fully successful as we would like. But despite these continuing problems, we look forward to a bright future for this program.

The Mott Institute has been most pleased with the apparent success of these three urban teacher training programs. We feel that our efforts have been more than rewarded. Certainly, these programs are not without their characteristic weaknesses. Continued evaluations and subsequent revisions will hopefully further upgrade these programs such that they will remain responsive to the needs of students of education who desire to serve urban youth.

More specific details about any of these urban teacher training programs may be secured by writing to:

Mott Institute for Community Improvement
College of Education
517 Erickson Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

You may address your inquiries to the attention of the coordinator who has charge of the program in which you are specifically interested or to Dr. Howard Hickey, Director.

Mrs. Jacquelyn Nickerson, Coordinator
MICI Teacher Education Program
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